NETWORK SWITCH WITH MULTIPLE-PORT SNIFFING

Abstract of the Disclosure

A novel system and method of monitoring network activity in a network switching system having multiple ports for receiving and transmitting data packets, and a decision making engine for controlling data forwarding between the ports. Data blocks representing received data packets are placed in data queues corresponding to the receive ports. The data queues are transferred to logic circuitry for processing in accordance with a predetermined algorithm to determine destination information. At least one port for transmitting data packets is identified based on the destination information. In addition, a sniffer port selected among the plurality of ports is identified as a transmit port to provide output of data packets received or transmitted by multiple sniffed ports. A traffic capture mechanism that enables the sniffer port to output data transferred via multiple sniffed ports includes a sniffer port configuration circuit for selecting the sniffer port, and a sniffed port configuration circuit for selecting the multiple sniffed ports. The sniffer port configuration circuit may provide a signal to enable or disable monitoring of data traffic on the multiple sniffed ports.